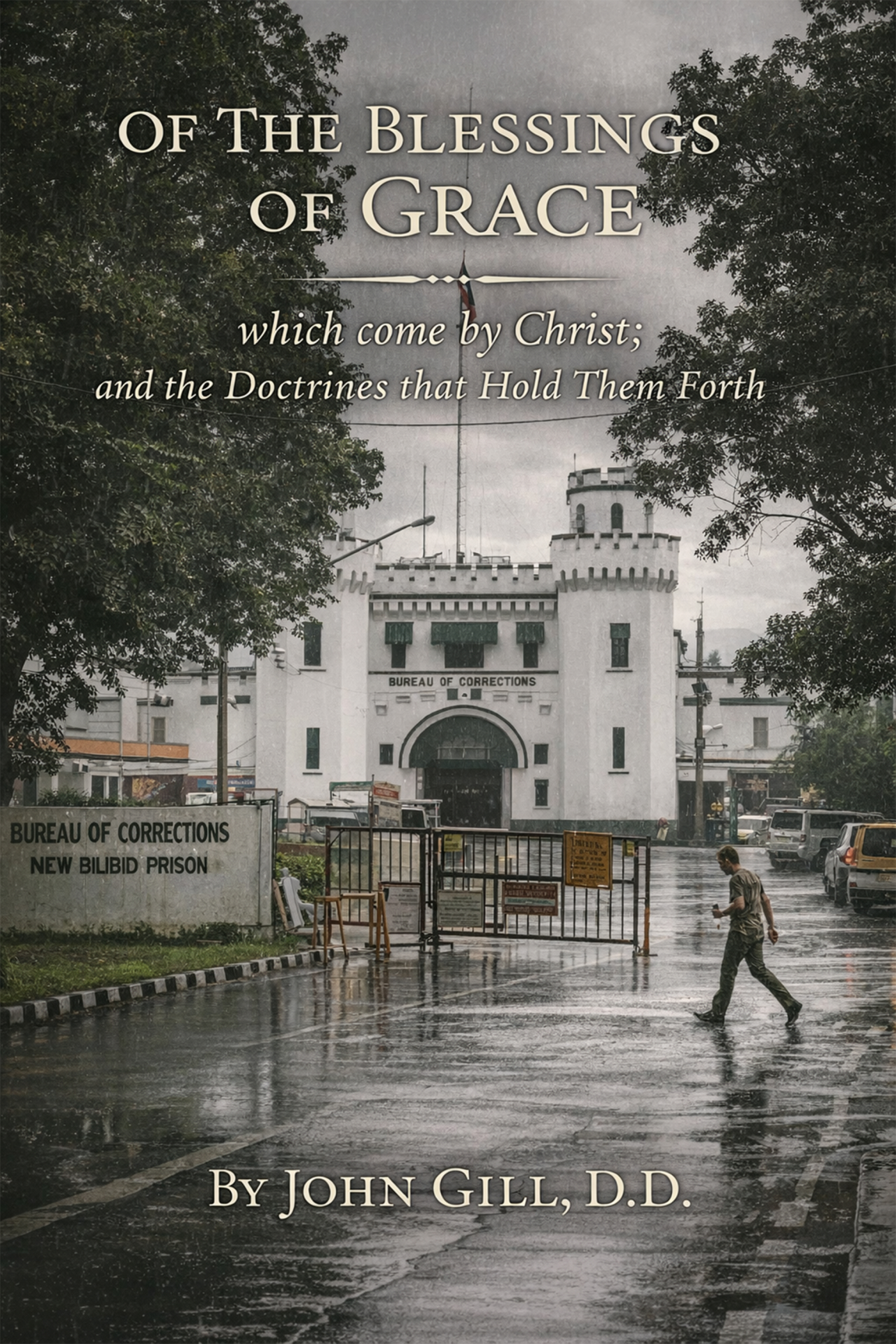
Of The Blessings of Grace

which come by Christ;
and the Doctrines that Hold Them Forth



By John Gill, D.D.

OF THE BLESSINGS OF GRACE, WHICH COME BY CHRIST; AND THE DOCTRINES THAT HOLD THEM FORTH

by

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Presentation and Dedication

This book is derived from Dr. John Gill's Body of Doctrinal and Practical Divinity, specifically Book IV, titled Of the Blessings of Grace and the Doctrines They Are Held Forth.

It is presented and dedicated to the students, pastors, and teachers of Christ-Centered Church Inc. Ministries, Philippines. This ministry is under the care of its founder and senior pastor (Bishop), William Ola Poloc. The dedication was made on January 16, 2020, by David Clarke, founder of Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Inc.

A Brief History of the Baguio Christ-Centered Churches Ministries Inc.

Pastor William O. Poloc Sr. was released from New Bilibid Prison in August 2002, where he had earned a Theology degree and initiated prison ministries in his hometown, Baguio City. With the support of his wife and David Clarke, a UK missionary and founder of Trojan Horse International, they began reaching out to prisoners and their families. In December 2002, they baptized 22 inmates at Baguio City Jail and 9 inmates at Benguet Provincial Jail. Among those baptized were William's wife, Beth Poloc, and Josephine Ortis, along with her daughter, Karen Basoon, all of whom had professed their faith in Jesus Christ. David Clarke returned to the UK in 2003 after completing his mission.

Inspired by God, Pastor Poloc and his team established a church in Baguio City to reach out to their families, friends, and former inmates still incarcerated in New Bilibid Prison. Through God's grace, the Baguio Christ-Centered Church Inc. was born.

Over the years, God has continued to bless the church, drawing more people to its ministry. A Bible school was established to train ministers who could not afford expensive theological education. Graduates of this school have gone on to reach lost souls and support Christ-Centered mission churches across the Philippines.

As a result, Christ-Centered Churches have been established in various parts of the country by God's grace and providence. The work in Northern Philippines, especially in Baguio City, has flourished. The Baguio Christ-Centered Church serves as the mother church for the following ministries:

The Pilot Christ-Centered Church

The Kamog Christ-Centered Church

The Christ-Centered Church Theological School (TULIP)

The Christ-Centered Radio Ministry

The Christ-Centered Jail Ministries

We are truly blessed by these works entrusted to us. To God be the glory!

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Christ-Centered Ministries Philippines

Personal Note from the Publisher

This book's publication coincides with the Golden Jubilee (Leviticus 25:8-13) of David Clarke's conversion, which occurred on January 16, 1971.

David Clarke remains the sole member of the Bierton Particular Baptists and was called by the Lord to preach the gospel in 1982. The doctrinal foundation of Trojan Horse International (TULIP) Inc. stems from the Articles of Religion of the Bierton Particular Baptists.

For more information: http://www.Biertonparticularbaptists.co.uk

View the Wikipedia Entry: Non-Conformist Place of Worship

Who Was Dr. John Gill?

John Gill (23 November 1697 – 14 October 1771) was an English Baptist pastor, biblical scholar, and theologian known for his firm Calvinistic beliefs regarding salvation. Born in Kettering, Northamptonshire, Gill attended Kettering Grammar School, where he excelled in the Latin classics and mastered Greek by the age of 11. He continued to educate himself in a wide range of subjects, including logic and Hebrew, the latter becoming a lifelong passion.

Pastoral Career

Gill began his pastoral work as an intern, assisting John Davis in Higham Ferrers in 1718 when he was 21 years old. The following year, in 1719, he became the pastor of the Strict Baptist church at Goat Yard Chapel in Horselydown, Southwark. His leadership lasted an impressive 51 years. In 1757, due to the growth of his congregation, the church relocated to larger premises at Carter Lane, St. Olave's Street, Southwark. This church had previously been led by Benjamin Keach and would later become the New Park Street Chapel, ultimately evolving into the Metropolitan Tabernacle,

where Charles Spurgeon served as pastor.

Notable Works

In 1748, Gill received an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from the University of Aberdeen. He was a highly learned scholar and a prolific writer. His most significant works include:

The Doctrine of the Trinity Stated and Vindicated (London, 1731)

The Cause of God and Truth (4 parts, 1725–28), written in response to Daniel Whitby's Five Points

An Exposition of the New Testament (3 volumes, 1746–48), which, along with his Exposition of the Old Testament (6 volumes, 1748–63), is considered his magnum opus

A Collection of Sermons and Tracts

A Dissertation Concerning the Antiquity of the Hebrew Language, Letters, Vowel-Points, and Accents (1767)

A Body of Doctrinal Divinity (1767)

A Body of Practical Divinity (1770)

Gill also edited and republished the works of Rev. Tobias Crisp, D.D. (1600–1643).

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

David Clarke, the publisher, had a life-changing experience on January 16, 1970, when he turned to Jesus Christ during a bad LSD trip. Christians from Brethren and Pentecostal churches guided him to read the Bible. However, he soon realized that different Christian groups held varying doctrinal views and practices. Some of these practices were confusing, unsound, and led to unusual behavior.

Unfortunately, this issue persists today and may have worsened. Arminianism has become more widespread, and many lack an understanding of the teachings of the Reformers from the 16th century. This classic book by Dr. John Gill addresses the Doctrines of Grace, offering readers a scriptural perspective on the subject.

This publication is produced by the uses of artificial Intelegance to rewrite Dr John Gills book. 'Of The Blessings of Grace that come by Christ and the doctrines that hold them forth'.

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CHAPTER 1: REDEMPTION THROUGH CHRIST

In the previous discussion, we explored the twofold nature of Christ's work—his humiliation and exaltation—and how he fulfilled his roles as Prophet, Priest, and King in these states. Now, we turn our focus to the blessings of grace that flow from his work, particularly through his priestly office. As the Bible declares, Christ has become the "High Priest of good things to come" (Hebrews 9:11). These blessings, once foretold, promised, and symbolized in the Old Testament, are now fulfilled and accessible through Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection. Central among these blessings is redemption, the foundation of grace. Let us examine this in detail, starting with the meaning of the word itself.

Understanding Redemption

The term redemption comes from the Latin word meaning "to buy back." In the New Testament, various Greek words emphasize this idea:

1 To Buy (ἀγοράζω, agorazo): Believers are said to be "bought with a price"—the blood of Christ (1 Corinthians 6:20; Revelation 5:9).

2 To Redeem or Buy Back (ἐξαγοράζω, exagorazo): This term implies being rescued or bought out of bondage (Galatians 3:13; 4:5).

3 To Ransom or Deliver (λυτρόω, lutroo): This signifies the release of captives through the payment of a ransom, referring to Christ's sacrificial death as the price paid for our freedom (1 Peter 1:18-19; Matthew 20:28).

Through Christ's blood, believers are ransomed from the guilt and penalty of sin, obtaining freedom and reconciliation with God.

Illustrations of Redemption in Scripture

The concept of redemption is illustrated throughout the Bible with various examples, particularly from Israel's history:

1. The Exodus from Egypt

Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage serves as a powerful type of Christ's redemption. The Israelites suffered under harsh slavery, just as humanity is enslaved by sin. Their deliverance, marked by the blood of the Passover lamb, prefigures Christ's sacrifice, where his blood secures freedom from sin's dominion. God is described as the Redeemer who brought Israel out of Egypt "with a stretched-out arm" (Exodus 6:6; Deuteronomy 7:8).

Moses, the agent of deliverance, is even called a "redeemer" in Acts 7:35, foreshadowing Christ as the ultimate Redeemer who frees his spiritual Israel.

2. The Ransom Payment

Under the Law, Israelites paid a half-shekel as "atonement money" to ransom their souls (Exodus 30:12-16). This payment applied equally to the rich and poor, symbolizing that all are redeemed by the same price—Christ's blood. Just as the ransom protected Israel from plague, Christ's atoning sacrifice delivers his people from spiritual death and eternal wrath.

3. The Redemption of Poor Israelites

When a poor Israelite sold himself to a stranger, a close relative, or kinsman-redeemer, could buy him back (Leviticus 25:47-49). This parallels Christ's role as our Kinsman-Redeemer. Though we were impoverished and enslaved by sin, Christ, who became one of us, paid the full price to redeem us and restore our freedom.

4. Release from Prison

A debtor could only be released from prison if someone paid his debts. Sinners are similarly held captive by the debt of sin, which they cannot repay. Christ, through his sacrifice, fully satisfies the demands of God's justice, proclaiming liberty to the captives (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18).

5. Deliverance from Slavery

The payment of a ransom to free a slave is a vivid picture of Christ's redemptive work. Believers, once enslaved to sin and powerless to escape, are liberated by the ransom price of Christ's blood (Job 33:24; Zechariah 9:11).

Key Themes of Redemption

The State of Captivity

Before redemption, humanity is in a state of spiritual captivity—enslaved by sin, under the curse of the Law, and subject to God's wrath. Justice demands payment for sin, and without redemption, humanity remains bound to eternal death.

The Nature of Redemption

Redemption is a complete deliverance. Through Christ's atonement, believers are:

Freed from the guilt and condemnation of sin.

Delivered from the dominion of sin.

Rescued from the curse of the Law and eternal death.

This deliverance is not partial but total, leading to full liberty in Christ (Romans 8:1; Titus 2:14).

The Cost of Redemption

Redemption is achieved at a tremendous cost—the precious blood of Christ. This price is fully sufficient to secure freedom for all who believe.

The Result of Redemption

Believers are no longer slaves to sin or under the Law's curse. Instead, they are children of God, set free to live in the glorious liberty of his grace. The full application of redemption will be realized at the resurrection when both soul and body are made perfect.

CHAPTER 2: THE CAUSES OF REDEMPTION BY CHRIST

In this chapter, we will examine the causes of redemption: where it originates, who accomplishes it, the means by which it is achieved, and its purposes.

1. The Source of Redemption: God's Everlasting Love

The primary cause of redemption is the eternal love of God. This love is the source of every act of grace—such as election, regeneration, and calling—and it also underpins redemption. God's love led to the gift of Christ as the Redeemer of His people. Before Christ was sent into the world, He was given as the covenant Redeemer. As Scripture says, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son" (John 3:16), showing that this gift was rooted in divine love. Even in the Old Testament, believers like Job recognized Christ as their Redeemer, and others awaited His coming.

The sending of Christ in the fullness of time to atone for sins is a clear demonstration of God's love (1 John 4:9-10). By not sparing His Son but giving Him up to die for sinners, God revealed the depth of His mercy and grace (Romans 5:8). Redemption is entirely an act of God's free and unmerited grace, which flows from His love without any conditions or merits on our part. As Scripture teaches, "We are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24).

God's mercy, which reflects His love toward sinful humanity, also plays a role in redemption. His tender compassion moved Him to send Christ as the Redeemer (Luke 1:68-78). This eternal purpose of redemption was determined by God before the world began, as part of His divine plan to save humanity through His Son. God's wisdom and foresight ensured that the perfect Redeemer and the perfect means of redemption were chosen.

2. The Redeemer: Jesus Christ, the Son of God

The one who accomplished redemption is Christ, the Son of God. He was chosen for this role, willingly accepted it, and fulfilled it completely. The Old Testament prophesied His coming as the Redeemer, and He has now obtained eternal redemption for His people through His blood.

a. Christ's Willingness to Redeem

Christ's love, grace, and mercy motivated Him to accept the call to be our Redeemer. His love for humanity was not earned but was freely given. This love led Him to lay down His life as a sacrifice for our sins (John 10:15; Titus 2:14). His compassion for our suffering and sinfulness further inspired Him to redeem us, declaring, "I will ransom them; I will redeem them" (Hosea 13:14). He also saw Himself as obligated by the covenant He made with the Father to fulfill the work of redemption.

b. Christ's Fitness for the Role

Christ was uniquely qualified to redeem humanity. As both fully God and fully man, He was the only one capable of bridging the gap between a holy God and sinful humans. No mere man or angel could achieve this. As God, Christ had the power, authority, and infinite value to offer a sufficient ransom. As man, He could live under the law, shed His blood, and die in humanity's place. His dual nature made Him the perfect Redeemer, ensuring both the satisfaction of God's justice and the salvation of His people.

c. The Means of Redemption

The means by which Christ achieved redemption was His blood, freely shed on the cross (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19). This blood was pure, untainted by sin, and of infinite value because it belonged to the Son of God. It was offered willingly, making it an acceptable ransom for humanity's sins. The price of redemption was paid to God's justice, not to Satan or any other power, as God's justice had the rightful claim against sinners.

3. The Purposes of Redemption

Redemption serves several important purposes:

To Satisfy God's Justice

Redemption allows God to remain just while justifying sinners who believe in Jesus. It upholds God's holiness, truth, and faithfulness, demonstrating His perfect justice and grace (Romans 3:25-26).

To Reconcile Believers to God

Through Christ's death, believers are reconciled to God and can enjoy

peace and joy in their relationship with Him (Romans 5:10-11).

To Secure Adoption as God's Children

Redemption removes the barrier of sin, allowing believers to experience the blessing of adoption as God's sons and daughters (Galatians 4:4-5).

To Sanctify Believers

Christ's sacrifice not only frees believers from sin but also purifies them, making them a people zealous for good works (Titus 2:14). Redemption initiates and sustains the process of sanctification through the work of the Holy Spirit.

To Deliver Believers from Evil

Redemption frees believers from sin, Satan, the world, the law, death, and hell. It secures for them every spiritual blessing promised in Christ (Galatians 3:13-14).

To Bring Eternal Salvation

The ultimate purpose of redemption is the everlasting salvation of God's elect, leading to their eternal life and happiness. Above all, it glorifies God, showcasing His grace, justice, and wisdom.

Here's a rewritten version of your text in more contemporary and readable English:

CHAPTER 3: THE OBJECTS OF CHRIST'S REDEMPTION

Now let's consider the specific objects of Christ's redemption. These refer to a particular and distinct group of people. Scripture describes them as being "redeemed from the earth," meaning they are chosen from among all humanity. One purpose of Christ's redemption is "to purify for himself a peculiar people" (Revelation 14:3-4; Titus 2:14). The Bible often emphasizes this by using the pronoun "us" when speaking of Christ's death and redemption, highlighting a specific group: "Christ died for us"; "God delivered him up for us all"; "He gave himself for us to redeem us"; and "You have redeemed us to God by your blood" (Romans 5:8; 8:32; Titus 2:14; Revelation 5:9).

While Christ gave his life as a ransom for "many" (Matthew 20:28), these "many" are distinct—they are the ones ordained to eternal life, given to Christ by the Father, and whose sins he bore on the cross. They are the ones for whom his blood was shed to bring forgiveness, who are made righteous by his obedience, and whom he leads to glory. Several points demonstrate that those redeemed by Christ are a special people:

The Redeemed Are Objects of God's Special Love

Redemption flows from God's love, not a general kindness shown to all creation, but a specific, distinguishing love. For instance, God says, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." Similarly, Christ's love is expressed toward his "own" people—those who belong to him as his sheep, his church, and his inheritance.

Election and Redemption Are Linked

Those whom Christ redeems are the same as those chosen by God. "Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is Christ who died!" (Romans 8:33). Those chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world are the same ones redeemed by his blood (Ephesians 1:4, 7). God's election and Christ's redemption cover the same group; no more are redeemed than those chosen, and this election flows from love, making it a distinguishing mark of a peculiar people.

Christ's Redemption Is Tied to His Role as Surety

Christ became the Surety of the covenant of grace, taking responsibility for those within it. As their Surety, he bore their sins, paid their debts, and satisfied God's justice on their behalf. Since Christ only served as Surety for those in the covenant, his redemption applies exclusively to them.

The Redeemed Are Called God's People

Scripture describes the redeemed as God's own people. For example, Isaiah states, "For the transgression of my people, he was stricken" (Isaiah 53:8). When Christ came to redeem them, Zechariah praised God, saying, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people" (Luke 1:68). These are not all people universally but a group "redeemed out of every nation" (Revelation 5:9). They are God's covenant people, chosen and set apart for him.

The Redeemed Are Called Christ's Sheep

Jesus refers to those he redeems as his sheep, distinct from others who "are not his sheep" (John 10:15, 26). His sheep know his voice, follow him, and are promised eternal life—they will never perish. This contrasts with the "goats," who are condemned to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:33-34).

The Redeemed Are Sons of God

Redemption and adoption are closely linked. Christ died to "gather into one the children of God scattered abroad" (John 11:52). These adopted sons and daughters are those who receive redemption through his blood

and will experience the full realization of this in the resurrection, when their bodies are redeemed (Romans 8:23). Not all people are God's children—only those born again by his grace.

The Redeemed Are Christ's Church and Bride

Christ loved the church and gave himself for her (Ephesians 5:25). He purchased her with his blood, referring to the elect whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life (Acts 20:28; Revelation 21:27). The church is his bride, distinct from all other groups, and he is her Redeemer (Isaiah 54:5).

From these points, it is clear that Christ's redemption is not universal. Though the ransom was paid for "many," the "many" do not include all people. If the redeemed are those who are the objects of God's special love, election, and covenant, then not all are redeemed. For example, God declares of some, "I will not show them favor" (Isaiah 27:11). If the redeemed are Christ's sheep, then they exclude the goats who face judgment.

Arguments Against Universal Redemption

First, let's examine why the idea of universal redemption cannot be true:

It Undermines God's Love

While it might seem to magnify God's love to say Christ died for everyone, it actually diminishes it. If Christ's death secured nothing for many and they remain lost, then God's love appears ineffective and arbitrary. True love, as displayed in redemption, saves and secures its objects.

It Challenges God's Wisdom

God's wisdom is evident in the plan of redemption, which perfectly achieves its goal. If Christ died for all but many remain unsaved, then either God failed in his purpose or his plan was flawed, neither of which can be true of an all-wise God.

It Contradicts God's Justice

If Christ paid the penalty for everyone's sins, it would be unjust for God to punish those same sins again in hell. Justice demands that sins fully paid for are not punished a second time.

In conclusion, redemption is effective and specific. Christ saves all whom he redeems, and his redemption is limited to those chosen by God, loved by Christ, and included in the covenant of grace.

4. The Universal Scheme and God's Power

The universal redemption scheme undermines God's power, suggesting He cannot accomplish His purposes. However, the Bible states, "The Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save." If Christ redeemed all people, but some are not saved, it implies either a lack of will or power on God's part. It cannot be a lack of will since this scheme assumes God wills all individuals to be saved. Therefore, it must be due to a lack of power, which contradicts God's omnipotence. If some are not saved because of their own evil dispositions, stubborn wills, or unbelief, does this mean humans are stronger than their Maker? Can human corruption block God's gracious intentions? God, who "works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure," can surely remove hardened hearts and unbelief, bringing faith in Christ. To think otherwise would deny God's limitless power.

5. The Universal Scheme and God's Immutability

This scheme also challenges God's unchanging nature. Scripture declares, "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Malachi 3:6). Yet, according to universal redemption, God changes. Initially, He loves all humanity and wills their salvation, but later His love turns to wrath as some perish. This portrays God as inconsistent, contrary to Scripture, which says, "With Him there is no variation or shadow of turning." God's plan does not waver—He remains steadfast in purpose.

6. The Universal Scheme and God's Glory

Universal redemption undermines God's ultimate goal: His glory. The purpose of redemption is to glorify God's grace, mercy, righteousness, and truth. If any redeemed individuals are not saved, God's plan fails, and He is robbed of glory. What honor is there for the Father if His redemptive plan doesn't succeed? How is the Son glorified if His work on the cross fails to save many? And where is the Spirit's glory if the redemption Christ achieved is not effectively applied? By contrast, the salvation of all the redeemed magnifies God's glory, as Scripture affirms: "Great is the glory of God in their salvation" (Psalm 21:5).

OBJECTIONS TO UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION REGARDING CHRIST'S WORK

1. It Undermines Christ's Love and Grace

The Bible exalts Christ's love, demonstrated through His sacrificial death for His people—even while they were His enemies. Christ said, "Greater love

has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). Yet, under universal redemption, Christ supposedly died for all but withholds grace from many and ultimately condemns some, saying, "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire." What kind of love is this?

2. It Undermines Christ's Satisfaction for Sin

Christ's work on the cross was meant to make full satisfaction for sin, paying the debt and securing freedom for the redeemed. If He made satisfaction for everyone, then all should be saved. If not all are saved, His work is either incomplete or ineffective. Advocates of universal redemption often deny the completeness of Christ's atonement, recognizing that if His satisfaction were perfect, it would ensure salvation for all.

3. It Makes Christ's Death in Vain for Many

If Christ died for all, yet many are condemned, His death is wasted for those who perish. How can His sacrifice be called effective if it doesn't secure salvation? Scripture declares, "Who shall condemn? It is Christ who died" (Romans 8:33). If Christ died for all, none should face condemnation—but multitudes do. This suggests either Christ didn't die for them, or His death lacks efficacy.

4. It Separates Christ's Redemption and Intercession

Universal redemption divides Christ's work of redemption and intercession, applying them to different groups. But Scripture links them: Christ intercedes for those He redeems. He said, "I pray for them; I do not pray for the world" (John 17:9). If He died for all, why wouldn't He pray for all? Such inconsistency is absurd and unfounded.

5. It Fails to Satisfy Christ

Scripture promises Christ will "see the travail of His soul and be satisfied" (Isaiah 53:11). How could He be satisfied if countless souls for whom He died are lost? Christ's joy was to redeem and bring His people to eternal life. Seeing multitudes suffer eternal separation would be a profound disappointment, contradicting His mission.

Other Arguments Against Universal Redemption

1. It Is Useless for the Unforgivable

Some sins are unforgivable, as Christ stated in Matthew 12:31–32. There are also those who were already condemned and in hell when Christ died (e.g., the men of Sodom, those drowned in the flood). It's inconceivable that Christ died for those irredeemable souls, making His death fruitless for

them.

2. It Is Useless for the Unevangelized

For centuries, many nations never heard of Christ, nor have some today. If Christ died for them, but they never receive the means of grace, His death serves no purpose for them.

3. It Offers No Assurance of Salvation

Universal redemption leaves salvation uncertain. If Christ died for all but not all are saved, how can anyone be sure of their salvation? By contrast, the doctrine of particular redemption provides assurance: "Let Israel hope in the Lord, for with Him is plenteous redemption" (Psalm 130:7).

4. It Diminishes Gratitude and Praise

Under universal redemption, those who are saved owe no special gratitude to Christ, as He did no more for them than for the lost. Salvation depends not on Christ's work but their own effort, leaving no basis for singing, "You are worthy, for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood" (Revelation 5:9).

CHAPTER 4: EXAMINING SCRIPTURES THAT APPEAR TO SUPPORT UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION

Certain passages in Scripture might seem, at first glance, to support the idea of universal redemption. These are often cited in its favor. However, they need closer examination. These passages can be grouped into three main categories:

1 Verses that use terms like "all" or "every" in relation to Christ's death and its benefits.

2 Verses mentioning "the world" or "the whole world" when discussing salvation.

3 Verses that suggest Christ died for individuals who might still perish.

4 Verses Using "All" or "Every"

Example 1: Luke 2:10-11

The angel declares, "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all people: today a Savior has been born to you." This does not mean Christ is the Savior of every individual. Rather, He was born as the Savior for certain people—like the shepherds, who represented those awaiting salvation. The "great joy for all people" refers to all of God's people, not every person globally. Many have never heard of Christ, and others, like Herod and the

Pharisees, rejected Him.

Example 2: John 1:7

John the Baptist came to testify about Christ "so that all might believe through him." This doesn't mean everyone is obligated to believe Christ died for them. At the time, Christ hadn't yet died. Instead, people were called to believe that He was the Messiah. Belief here refers to general acknowledgment, not necessarily saving faith, which only applies to those truly convicted of their sin and need for salvation.

Example 3: John 12:32

Jesus says, "When I am lifted up, I will draw all people to myself." This doesn't mean every individual will be drawn to Him. Many reject Him. Rather, "all" refers to people from all groups—Jews and Gentiles—being brought to Christ after His death.

Example 4: Romans 5:18

"Through one man's righteousness, the free gift came to all people." This refers to the righteousness of Christ, which justifies believers. However, not all are justified; only Christ's spiritual descendants are. The context contrasts Adam's role in bringing sin to all his descendants with Christ bringing righteousness to His people.

Example 5: 1 Timothy 2:4

God "wants all people to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth." This doesn't mean it is His will for every individual to be saved—if it were, all would be saved. Rather, it means people of all kinds (Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor) are included in God's saving plan.

2. Verses Using "World" or "Whole World"

Example 1: John 3:16

"God so loved the world that He gave His only Son." The "world" here does not mean every individual. It refers to humanity broadly, especially Gentiles, challenging the Jewish belief that God's love was exclusive to them

Example 2: 1 John 2:2

Christ is "the atoning sacrifice... for the sins of the whole world." This doesn't mean He died for every person. John distinguishes between the Jewish audience ("our sins") and Gentiles ("the whole world"), meaning Christ died for people from all nations, not just Jews.

3. Verses Suggesting Christ Died for Those Who Might Perish

Example 1: Romans 14:15

"Do not destroy by your eating someone for whom Christ died." This doesn't mean eternal destruction but refers to harming a fellow believer's faith or peace by insensitive actions.

Example 2: 2 Peter 2:1

False teachers are described as "denying the Lord who bought them." This likely refers to God's deliverance of Israel, not Christ's atoning death. These individuals reject their covenant relationship with God, leading to judgment.

Key Takeaways About Redemption

1 It Aligns with God's Perfections

Redemption reflects God's love, grace, wisdom, and justice.

2 Only Christ Could Achieve It

No human could redeem themselves; only Christ's blood could satisfy God's justice.

3 It Is Particular

Redemption is for Christ's elect—His spiritual "sheep."

4 It Is Plentiful and Complete

It ensures salvation, justification, and eternal life for the redeemed.

5 It Is Eternal

Unlike temporary deliverances in history, Christ's redemption secures everlasting salvation.

CHAPTER 5: THE SATISFACTION OF CHRIST

The concept of Christ's satisfaction is a central and glorious aspect of Christian theology. It sets Christianity apart from other religions and underpins the doctrine of redemption. While the term "satisfaction" itself may not appear explicitly in scripture, the concept is thoroughly supported. Satisfaction refers to what Christ has done and suffered on behalf of sinners, fulfilling the demands of God's justice and law.

The Necessity of Satisfaction

The Reality of Sin

Humanity is inherently sinful, as shown by scripture, conscience, and experience. Sin alienates people from God, creating a barrier that must be addressed for reconciliation. Without satisfaction, there can be no salvation.

Christ's death bridges this gap, reconciling sinners to God by bearing the punishment that was due to them.

God's Will to Save

It is God's will to save sinners, as seen in his eternal plan and covenant of grace. This plan required Christ to suffer and die in place of sinners. While some argue that God could forgive sins without satisfaction, such forgiveness would conflict with His perfect justice, holiness, and truth. Forgiveness through satisfaction ensures that God's justice is upheld while His mercy is displayed.

The Grounds of Christ's Satisfaction

The foundation for Christ's satisfaction lies in the eternal covenant of grace. In this covenant:

The Plan of Reconciliation

God and Christ agreed to reconcile sinners by imputing their sins to Christ and His righteousness to them. Christ willingly became a substitute for sinners, taking on their guilt and punishment.

Christ as the Surety

Christ voluntarily took on the role of a surety, guaranteeing the payment of the debt owed by sinners. His obedience and sacrifice fulfilled the requirements of God's law and justice.

How Satisfaction Was Made

Christ's Active Obedience

Christ lived a sinless life, perfectly fulfilling God's law. His righteousness is imputed to believers, granting them justification.

Christ's Suffering and Death

Christ bore the penalty of sin through His suffering and death. This included physical pain, shame, and the spiritual anguish of being forsaken by God. By enduring these, Christ satisfied the demands of God's justice fully and completely.

The Effects of Christ's Satisfaction

The End of Sin's Power

Christ's satisfaction nullifies sin's condemning power for believers. Their sins are forgiven, and they are freed from guilt and punishment.

Reconciliation with God

Through Christ's atonement, believers are brought into a state of peace and favor with God. His justice is satisfied, and His mercy is displayed.

Imputation of Righteousness

Christ's perfect righteousness is credited to believers, justifying them before God and securing their eternal life.

Eternal Security

Believers are assured of deliverance from God's wrath and enjoy eternal safety and blessings.

The Glory of God

Christ's satisfaction glorifies God's justice, holiness, and love. It demonstrates the harmony of His attributes in the salvation of sinners.

Objections Answered

Does Satisfaction Neglect God's Mercy?

No. Satisfaction allows God's mercy and justice to coexist. Through Christ's work, God is both just and the justifier of sinners.

Does Satisfaction Undermine Grace?

No. Grace is evident in God providing His Son and accepting His sacrifice on behalf of sinners. Forgiveness remains free for believers, though it came at great cost to Christ.

Does Satisfaction Make Christ More Loving than the Father?

No. The Father's love is displayed in sending His Son, and the Son's love is shown in His willing sacrifice. Both are equally loving.

Did Christ Make Satisfaction to Himself?

In a sense, yes. As God, Christ is part of the triune God offended by sin. However, His satisfaction was made to the justice of God as a whole, encompassing all three persons of the Trinity.

Does Satisfaction Promote Licentiousness?

Absolutely not. Christ's love compels believers to live holy lives. His sacrifice motivates gratitude and obedience, not lawlessness.

CHAPTER 6: ON PROPITIATION, ATONEMENT, AND RECONCILIATION THROUGH CHRIST

Although the Bible does not explicitly use the term "satisfaction" to describe Christ's work, it employs related terms such as "propitiation," "atonement," and "reconciliation." This chapter explains these terms and their

connection to Christ's work, which clarifies the doctrine of his satisfaction.

1. Propitiation

The term "propitiation" first appears in relation to Christ in Romans 3:25: "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation." Here, it signifies Christ as the one who makes God favorable toward humanity by appeasing divine justice, resolving anger, and restoring peace. This was Christ's role as a mediator, bridging the gap between God and humanity and securing terms of peace. Titles like "Prince of Peace" and "our Peace" highlight this role.

Under the Old Testament law, sacrifices symbolized the atonement of sins, prefiguring Christ's ultimate sacrifice. His death was a "sweet-smelling offering" to God, satisfying divine justice and fulfilling the law. The Greek word for "propitiation" in Romans 3:25 is also used in the Greek translation of Exodus 25:21, referring to the mercy seat—a symbol of God's presence and atonement. This connection points to Christ as the ultimate mercy seat, offering sinners hope for grace and communion with God.

The concept reappears in 1 John 4:10, which states that God sent his Son as the propitiation for our sins, and 1 John 2:2, which affirms that Christ's sacrifice applies to all—Jews and Gentiles alike. His atoning work satisfies divine justice, enabling God to show mercy despite humanity's sins.

2. Atonement

The word "atonement" frequently appears in the Old Testament, particularly in Leviticus, describing sacrifices that covered sin. The Hebrew term for atonement means "to cover," symbolizing how Christ shields believers from the law's curses, God's wrath, and justice's demands. However, in the New Testament, "atonement" is used only once, in Romans 5:11: "By whom we have now received the atonement." Here, it implies not just Christ's atoning act but its application to believers, leading to joy and peace.

The Greek term often translated as "atonement" is better understood as "reconciliation." This highlights that atonement involves restoring a relationship broken by sin, satisfying God's justice, and bringing peace.

3. Reconciliation

The Bible frequently speaks of reconciliation in relation to Christ's work. Reconciliation starts with God, as described in 2 Corinthians 5:18: "All things are of God, who has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ." God initiated reconciliation out of his eternal love, and it was executed through Christ's death on the cross (Romans 5:10, Ephesians 2:16, Colossians 1:20-22).

Reconciliation addresses humanity's enmity toward God. Humans are described as "enemies" of God because of their sinful minds and actions (Romans 8:7). Sin not only alienates people from God but also provokes divine justice. Christ's death reconciles this broken relationship, restoring fellowship between God and humanity.

A. The Nature of Human Enmity

Internal Enmity: Sinful minds are hostile toward God, rejecting his existence, misrepresenting his attributes, and opposing his will. People resist Christ's rule and mock the work of the Spirit.

External Enmity: Sinful actions demonstrate hostility toward God. They violate his law, provoke his wrath, and separate humanity from his presence.

Divine Enmity: Although God's eternal love for his elect never changes, his justice declares sinners as enemies, subject to judgment. Christ's death reconciles this legal enmity, satisfying God's justice and removing the barrier of sin.

B. What Reconciliation Involve

Reconciliation mirrors the restoration of friendship between people. Humanity was originally in harmony with God, but sin disrupted this relationship. Christ's atonement restores this fellowship, allowing believers to experience God's favor openly. This reconciliation is not about changing God's love—his love is eternal and unchanging—but about addressing the demands of divine justice.

God's love motivated Christ's mission. As John 3:16 and Romans 5:8 affirm, God sent Christ because of his love. The reconciliation achieved by Christ satisfies divine justice, removes sin's obstacles, and allows believers to enjoy open fellowship with God.

C. The Means of Reconciliation

Christ's death is the sole means of reconciliation. Human works, repentance, or faith cannot satisfy God's justice. Only Christ's sacrifice, as both fully God and fully man, could meet the demands of the law. His bloodshed and death accomplished what no animal sacrifice or human effort ever could.

Reconciliation is vividly described in Ephesians 2:14-16, where Christ is said to have "made peace" by abolishing the enmity between God and humanity. Through his death, Christ reconciles sinners to God, making peace by the blood of his cross.

Conclusion

Propitiation, atonement, and reconciliation all describe aspects of Christ's work to restore humanity's relationship with God. His sacrifice satisfies divine justice, covers human sin, and reconciles sinners to their Creator. This reconciliation is not about changing God's love but about removing sin's barrier and enabling believers to enjoy God's open favor. Through Christ, peace and fellowship with God are fully restored.

CHAPTER 7: THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

The idea of forgiveness follows naturally after the concept of atonement since sins can only be forgiven when a satisfactory price has been paid. Under the law of Moses, forgiveness was granted after a symbolic atonement through sacrifices (Leviticus 4 and 5). This teaches us that the concept of forgiveness is not something we can deduce from human reasoning alone—it's revealed by God.

Human logic might suggest that God, being good and merciful, would forgive sins. But since He is also just, we cannot be certain how forgiveness is possible without divine revelation. Forgiveness is not something the law provides; the law only condemns sin. Instead, forgiveness is a gift of the Gospel, which was entrusted to Christ's disciples to preach (Luke 24:47, Acts 13:38). Let's examine the doctrine of forgiveness more closely.

1. Evidence for Forgiveness

Scripture clearly declares the reality of forgiveness. David writes, "There is forgiveness with You" (Psalm 130:4), and Daniel adds, "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness" (Daniel 9:9). Forgiveness is a key promise in the covenant of grace: "I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more" (Hebrews 8:12).

Forgiveness was accomplished through Christ's sacrifice. His blood was shed to provide remission of sins, as foretold by the prophets and confirmed in the New Testament (Romans 3:25, Matthew 26:28). Numerous examples, like the Israelites, David, and Paul, demonstrate that God forgives sins (Psalm 78:38, 1 Timothy 1:13). Forgiveness brings peace, comfort, and salvation to God's people (Isaiah 40:1–2).

2. Expressions of Forgiveness

Scripture uses various phrases to describe forgiveness, helping us understand its nature:

Lifting or taking away sin: God removes the burden of sin from us and places it on Christ (Psalm 32:1).

Covering sin: Forgiveness hides sin from God's sight through Christ's atonement (Psalm 85:2).

Not imputing sin: God does not count our sins against us but instead counts us righteous because of Christ (Psalm 32:2).

Blotting out sin: God cancels the record of our sins, much like erasing a debt (Isaiah 43:25, Colossians 2:14).

Forgetting sin: God chooses to remember our sins no more (Hebrews 8:12).

Cleansing sin: Forgiveness makes us pure and spotless in God's sight (Isaiah 1:18, Psalm 51:7).

3. Types of Forgiven Sins

God forgives sins of all types and quantities:

By quality: Forgiveness covers every kind of sin—iniquities, transgressions, errors, and omissions.

By quantity: Forgiveness is complete, covering all past, present, and future sins. Even the gravest sins are forgivable through Christ's atonement, except for the sin against the Holy Spirit, which is unpardonable (Matthew 12:31–32).

4. The Source of Forgiveness

God alone forgives sin. Only God can pardon sins because they are offenses against Him. Ministers can declare forgiveness based on the Gospel, but they do not have the power to grant it (Mark 2:7).

The Trinity is involved in forgiveness: The Father planned it, the Son purchased it through His blood, and the Spirit applies it to our hearts (Ephesians 1:7).

5. Effects of Forgiveness

When forgiveness is experienced, it brings:

Peace of conscience: The burden of guilt is lifted, bringing inner peace (Romans 5:11).

Joy and cheerfulness: Forgiveness lifts the soul from despair to joy (Psalm 51:8).

Comfort: Assurance of forgiveness brings relief from fear of God's wrath (Isaiah 40:1–2).

Confidence in approaching God: Forgiven believers can pray boldly (Hebrews 10:19).

Worship and service: Forgiveness inspires reverence and worship (Psalm 130:4).

Love for God and Christ: Awareness of forgiveness deepens love for the Savior (Luke 7:47).

Repentance: Forgiveness motivates true sorrow for sin and turning from it (Ezekiel 16:63).

Gratitude: Forgiveness inspires thankfulness for God's mercy (Psalm 103:2–3).

6. Characteristics of Forgiveness

It is free: Forgiveness is given out of God's abundant grace, not earned by works (Ephesians 1:7).

It is complete: All sins are forgiven at once, though the experience of forgiveness may unfold over time.

It is permanent: Once forgiven, sins are never recalled or held against the believer again (Micah 7:18–19).

7. Common Questions about Forgiveness

Are some sins inherently pardonable? No sin is "venial" or naturally pardonable. All sins deserve death, but God forgives all kinds of sins through Christ's blood, except the sin against the Holy Spirit.

Can sins be forgiven in the afterlife? No. Forgiveness must be received in this life. After death, there is no further opportunity for repentance or pardon.

Will forgiven sins be exposed on Judgment Day? No. Forgiveness means sins are covered and forgotten by God. The righteous will stand faultless before Him, clothed in Christ's righteousness.

Should believers pray for forgiveness? Yes, though not because forgiveness has to be re-earned. Instead, we pray for a renewed sense of God's grace and restoration when we fail (Luke 11:4).

This chapter highlights the richness of God's grace in forgiving sins through Christ. It calls believers to gratitude, peace, and a life of worship in response to this incredible gift.

CHAPTER 8: ON JUSTIFICATION

Justification refers to God's act of declaring a sinner righteous through the work of Jesus Christ. It is closely related to the forgiveness of sins. Although forgiveness and justification occur simultaneously in God's plan, they can be

distinguished. Forgiveness removes guilt, while justification goes further by declaring the sinner righteous based on Christ's righteousness.

Key Points About Justification

The Source of Justification:

God alone is the one who justifies (Romans 3:30). It is His sovereign act, flowing from His grace.

Justification is based on the righteousness of Christ, which God credits to believers.

The Role of Grace:

Justification is entirely an act of God's free grace (Titus 3:7).

It is not earned by human effort or merit but given freely because of Christ's work.

The Role of Faith:

Faith is the means by which individuals receive justification (Romans 5:1). It does not justify on its own but connects believers to Christ, whose righteousness justifies them.

The Relationship Between Forgiveness and Justification

Similarities:

Both come from God's grace.

Both are made possible through Christ's blood.

They are received by faith and granted simultaneously.

Differences:

Forgiveness cancels sin, while justification provides a positive declaration of righteousness.

Justification goes beyond pardon by granting the believer the status of being righteous before God.

The Nature of Christ's Righteousness

Christ's righteousness includes:

His perfect obedience to God's law (active obedience).

His suffering and death for sin (passive obedience).

This righteousness is imputed (credited) to believers, making them acceptable to God.

How Justification Works

Imputation:

Justification involves the crediting of Christ's righteousness to the believer (Romans 4:6).

Just as Adam's sin was imputed to humanity, Christ's righteousness is imputed to those who trust in Him.

Faith and Works:

Faith receives Christ's righteousness; works play no role in justification (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Good works follow justification as a response of gratitude, not as a condition for it.

Effects of Justification

Peace with God:

Believers are reconciled to God and no longer face condemnation (Romans 5:1).

Freedom from Punishment:

Justification removes all fear of God's wrath, guaranteeing eternal life (Romans 8:1).

Acceptance by God:

Justified believers are fully accepted by God and are heirs to eternal life (Romans 8:17).

Hope of Glory:

Justification assures the believer of future glory and eternal life (Titus 3:7).

The Importance of Justification

Justification is central to the Gospel and the Christian faith.

It distinguishes Christianity from systems that rely on works for salvation.

It offers assurance of salvation, emphasizing that believers stand righteous before God solely through Christ.

Conclusion

Justification is the cornerstone of the Christian faith, accomplished through the grace of God, the work of Christ, and received by faith. It frees believers from guilt and assures them of eternal life, securing peace with God and the promise of future glory.

CHAPTER 9: OF ADOPTION

Adoption is a distinct blessing from justification, though the two are closely related. Justification entitles believers to eternal life legally, while adoption makes them God's children by grace. Both give believers a claim to eternal life, but through different means: justification through Christ's righteousness and adoption through God's fatherly grace.

Adoption, unlike justification or pardon, is a separate act of divine favor. A criminal may be pardoned or acquitted, yet that does not make him a son. Adoption involves God taking those who were by nature "children of wrath" and making them His own children through an act of grace.

Key Aspects of Adoption

Nature of Adoption: Believers become God's children not as Christ is (God's only begotten Son) or as angels are (God's creation), but through adoption. Adoption is grounded in grace and realized through Christ's redemptive work and the witness of the Holy Spirit.

Types of Adoption:

Civil Adoption: Practiced in many cultures, such as Moses being adopted by Pharaoh's daughter or Esther by Mordecai. This served as a legal process to transfer inheritance rights.

Spiritual Adoption: Unlike civil adoption, spiritual adoption is not based on human merit but is a pure act of God's sovereign grace.

Comparison with Civil Adoption:

In both cases, an individual who had no right to an inheritance is brought into a family and made an heir.

In civil adoption, the adopter acts voluntarily. Similarly, spiritual adoption is an act of God's free will and love.

Privileges of Adoption:

Believers bear the name of God as His children.

They are included in His household and provided for as heirs to an eternal inheritance.

They owe God honor, reverence, and obedience, as children do to a parent.

Differences from Civil Adoption:

God's adoption of believers is not motivated by any merit in them;

rather, it is purely an act of love and grace.

While civil adoption cannot change the nature of the adopted child, God transforms His children, imparting His divine nature and preparing them for their inheritance.

Relation to Regeneration:

Adoption precedes regeneration. Believers are not adopted because they are regenerated but are regenerated because they are adopted. Adoption gives the legal status of children, while regeneration gives the nature of children.

Causes of Adoption

Efficient Cause: God is the author of adoption, acting as a loving Father. The Father planned adoption in eternity, the Son secured it through redemption, and the Spirit applies it by giving believers the assurance of sonship.

Moving Cause: God's love is the sole motivation for adoption. It is a display of His amazing grace toward unworthy sinners.

Privileges and Benefits of Adoption

Believers become heirs of an eternal inheritance, including God Himself as their portion.

They enjoy a permanent relationship with God as Father, which cannot be undone.

The Spirit of adoption assures them of their status and helps them cry, "Abba, Father."

Adoption brings access to God, conformity to Christ, and an eternal inheritance of glory.

CHAPTER 10: OF THE LIBERTY OF THE SONS OF GOD

One of the greatest privileges of adoption is liberty. Christ's work grants true freedom to believers, freeing them from bondage to sin, Satan, and the law. This freedom is described as "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:21).

Twofold Liberty

Liberty of Grace: Experienced in this life, this includes:

Freedom from Sin: Not freedom to sin, but freedom from its guilt, power, and dominion.

Freedom from Satan: Believers are no longer under Satan's control,

though they may still face his temptations.

Freedom from the Law: This includes freedom from the ceremonial law and the law's condemnation as a covenant of works. Believers, however, are still bound to the moral law as a rule of life.

Liberty of Glory: This ultimate freedom will be fully realized in eternity when believers are free from sin, suffering, and death, enjoying perfect holiness and communion with God.

Christian Liberty in Practice

Freedom from Human Traditions: Believers are not bound by man-made religious rules or traditions, such as those of the Pharisees or later innovations like those in Roman Catholicism.

Freedom in Using God's Gifts: Christians may freely enjoy the good things God has provided, so long as they do so with gratitude and in moderation.

Freedom in Indifferent Matters: Believers are not bound by legalistic rules about neutral matters (e.g., food or drink). However, they should avoid causing others to stumble.

Freedom in Worship: Christians are free to worship God according to His Word, without fear of persecution or the imposition of human traditions.

Access to God

Adoption grants believers bold access to God as their Father. They can approach Him confidently in prayer and worship, seeking grace and mercy in times of need.

Freedom from the Fear of Death

Through Christ's victory, believers are delivered from the fear of death, knowing it is but a passage to eternal life.

Eternal Liberty

In the resurrection, believers will experience perfect freedom, being completely free from sin and all its consequences. They will enjoy eternal communion with God and the full inheritance promised to them as sons and daughters.

Conclusion

Adoption and liberty are among the highest blessings of grace. Through adoption, believers are made children of God, heirs of an eternal inheritance, and recipients of His love and care. Their liberty in Christ frees them from

bondage and enables them to live joyfully and obediently, both now and in eternity.

CHAPTER 11: ON REGENERATION

Regeneration follows adoption and serves as its evidence. It describes those who have been given the power to become children of God (John 1:12-13). While adoption and regeneration are distinct, they are closely connected in experience and fulfillment.

Regeneration can be viewed in two ways:

Broadly, it includes calling, conversion, and sanctification.

Narrowly, it refers to the implantation of grace in the soul, which leads to conversion and sanctification, culminating in holiness perfected in heaven.

Let's explore regeneration by understanding its meaning, causes, subjects, effects, and properties.

I. What is Regeneration?

Regeneration is a mysterious, spiritual rebirth, often misunderstood, as it was by Nicodemus in John 3. It is expressed through various phrases:

Born Again: This signifies a second birth, contrasting with the first. The first birth is physical, sinful, and corrupt, while the second birth is spiritual, holy, and incorruptible. It transforms people from being fleshly and carnal to spiritual and righteous.

Born from Above: Regeneration originates from God in heaven. It is a gift of divine grace, making believers partakers of a heavenly calling.

The New Birth: Regeneration creates a "new man" within, with a new heart, desires, and understanding. This change is not an improvement of the old nature but the creation of something entirely new.

Quickening: Regeneration brings spiritual life to those dead in sin. Like a newborn baby, the regenerated soul begins to breathe spiritually, craving God's Word and growing in grace.

Christ Formed in the Heart: In regeneration, Christ's image is imprinted on the believer. His Spirit works faith, hope, and love within, making Christ live in the heart of the believer.

Partaking in the Divine Nature: Regeneration makes believers share in God's spiritual and moral attributes, such as holiness, goodness, and love.

Internal Grace: This new life, worked by the Holy Spirit, involves the

implantation of faith, hope, and love, the "seed" of spiritual life.

II. The Causes of Regeneration

Efficient Cause: God alone regenerates. Humanity, being spiritually dead, cannot regenerate itself. Regeneration is likened to creation and resurrection—both acts of divine power.

Moving Cause: God's grace, love, and mercy drive regeneration. It is not due to human merit but entirely God's sovereign will (James 1:18).

Meritorious Cause: Christ's resurrection secures regeneration. Just as His resurrection declared His divine Sonship, so regeneration confirms believers as God's children.

Instrumental Cause: God uses His Word and the preaching of the gospel to convey the grace of regeneration. While ministers are instruments, the Spirit applies this grace directly.

III. Who Are Regenerated?

God regenerates people, not angels or animals. These people are chosen by His sovereign grace and predestined to be conformed to Christ's image. They are often described as:

Elect: Chosen according to God's foreknowledge (1 Peter 1:2-3).

Redeemed: Purchased by Christ's blood.

Adopted: Sons of God by His grace.

Before regeneration, they are spiritually dead, unable to please God. After regeneration, their entire being—soul and body—begins to live for Him.

IV. Effects of Regeneration

New Spiritual Life: Regeneration imparts every grace of the Spirit, such as faith, repentance, and love. Believers now desire God, His Word, and His people, reflecting their transformation.

Knowledge of Grace: Regenerated individuals understand God's love, adoption, and justification. They experience the peace and joy of salvation.

Ability to Do Good Works: Created anew in Christ, believers are equipped to live righteously. They now walk in obedience, empowered by the Spirit.

Fitness for God's Kingdom: Regeneration prepares believers for both the church on earth and eternal life in heaven. Without it, no one can see or

enter the kingdom of God.

V. Properties of Regeneration

Passive Work: Humans play no role in their regeneration. It is entirely God's work, like creation or resurrection.

Irresistible: God's grace cannot be thwarted. It overcomes all resistance in the human heart.

Instantaneous and Complete: Regeneration happens in a moment, not gradually, and is perfect in its kind.

Permanent: Regeneration can never be undone. Those born of God will never lose their spiritual life.

Spiritual Warfare: Regenerated believers experience ongoing conflict between their old sinful nature and the new life in Christ. However, the new nature ultimately prevails.

Regeneration is a foundational doctrine, revealing God's sovereign grace and power in transforming sinners into saints. It is the beginning of a new and eternal life with God.

CHAPTER 12: ON EFFECTUAL CALLING

Effectual calling refers to the powerful and transformative call of God that leads individuals to salvation. While it is closely related to regeneration (the infusion of grace into the heart), it is distinct in its emphasis on God's active summoning of the sinner to faith and obedience. This calling is called "effectual" because it achieves its intended result: the conversion of those whom God has chosen.

Key Points About Effectual Calling:

Nature of Effectual Calling

This call is not merely a civil or external appointment, like a call to office or service, but a deeply spiritual one. It includes both an external call (through the gospel) and an internal call (by the Holy Spirit). The external call is general, reaching many, but only the internal call transforms hearts.

Distinctions Between External and Internal Calls

External Call: Delivered through the ministry of the Word to all who hear it. Many resist this call, as it requires repentance and faith.

Internal Call: A supernatural work of the Holy Spirit that illuminates the mind, frees the will, and enables a heartfelt response to God.

Reactions to the Call

Many resist the gospel due to ignorance, pride, or rebellion. Yet, the internal call, empowered by God's grace, is irresistible and always effective.

Purpose of Effectual Calling

The ultimate aim is the salvation of God's elect, leading them to eternal glory. It magnifies God's grace, turning sinners into saints and glorifying His name.

CHAPTER 13: ON CONVERSION

Conversion involves a sinner turning to God. It differs from regeneration (which is entirely God's act) as it includes the sinner's response to divine grace. Regeneration makes the sinner alive; conversion is the act of turning to God in repentance and faith.

Understanding Conversion:

True Conversion

Genuine conversion is an internal transformation, characterized by a renewed mind, heart, and will. It leads to a love for God, His Word, and His people, as well as a rejection of sin.

What Conversion Involves

Turning from Darkness to Light: A move from ignorance and sin to the truth of God.

Deliverance from Satan: Breaking free from the power of sin and Satan's control.

Turning to God: Actively seeking fellowship with God through Christ.

Rejection of Idols: Forsaking worldly and personal idols to worship and serve the living God.

Embracing Christ's Righteousness: Rejecting self-righteousness and trusting in Christ for salvation.

Causes of Conversion

Efficient Cause: God alone is the author of conversion, drawing sinners by His grace.

Instrumental Means: The Word of God, especially the preaching of the gospel, is the primary tool used by the Holy Spirit to bring about conversion.

Subjects of Conversion

Conversion is not universal but specific to God's elect—those whom He has chosen, redeemed, and calls to Himself. These include individuals from all walks of life, often those seen as weak or sinful in the world's eyes.

Characteristics of Conversion

Conversion is a sovereign act of God, demonstrating His love and grace. It is both a response to His calling and an irresistible act of His will, leading to a profound and lasting change in the believer's life.

CHAPTER 14: ON SANCTIFICATION

1. The Foundation of Sanctification

Sanctification begins with regeneration, where a person is spiritually renewed and given a new nature. This new creation, rooted in righteousness and holiness, manifests in effectual calling (a divine invitation to holiness) and conversion (turning away from sin). While regeneration starts the process, sanctification is a gradual journey that continues throughout life and concludes in glorification, making it distinct from regeneration and conversion.

2. Sanctification's Divine Origin

Sanctification is attributed to all three persons of the Trinity:

God the Father: Sanctification originates in His eternal election, setting people apart for His service and holiness (Jude 1:1).

Jesus Christ: Christ sanctifies through His sacrifice, representing believers and imputing His righteousness to them (1 Cor. 1:30; Heb. 13:12).

The Holy Spirit: He performs the ongoing work of sanctification in believers, which is referred to as the "sanctification of the Spirit" (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2).

This chapter focuses on the Spirit's role in sanctification.

3. The Nature of Sanctification

Sanctification is:

A Holy Work: It creates genuine holiness, far beyond mere moral behavior or external religious actions (e.g., Pharisees). It stems from God's grace, not human effort.

Transformational: It involves putting off the "old self" (sinful nature) and putting on the "new self" (holiness, Eph. 4:22–24). It changes not just behavior but the heart and spirit.

A Progressive Process: It involves two aspects:

Mortification: Weakening sin's influence and resisting its temptations (Col. 3:5).

Vivification: Cultivating new spiritual life, including faith, love, and godly living.

4. Evidence of Sanctification

Sanctification becomes visible in:

Actions Toward God:

Reverence and awe for His nature and works.

Love and delight in His presence, Word, and worship.

Submission to His will, even in suffering.

A desire for communion with Him.

Actions Toward Christ:

Trusting Him for cleansing from sin.

Submitting to His authority as King.

Striving to follow His example and conform to His image.

Actions Toward the Spirit:

Relishing the things of the Spirit.

Following His guidance and striving to avoid grieving Him.

Seeking to live a Spirit-filled life.

Actions Toward Sin:

Loving God's law, which opposes sin.

Loathing and abhorring sin in thought and deed.

Actively opposing sin and striving for purity.

Mourning over sin and longing for full deliverance from it.

5. The Subjects and Extent of Sanctification

Sanctification applies to believers only, specifically those:

Chosen by God: All who are elected to salvation are sanctified in time.

Redeemed by Christ: Those for whom Christ died are sanctified as His holy people.

Sanctification affects the whole person:

The soul: The mind, will, and emotions are renewed, bringing delight

in God and His ways.

The body: Its desires and actions are brought under control, resisting sin and serving righteousness.

6. The Causes of Sanctification

Sanctification arises from:

God: It is the work of the Father, Son, and Spirit.

Grace: God's grace and goodwill initiate and sustain sanctification.

The Word: The Scriptures and preaching are key instruments for spiritual growth.

Providence: Even hardships and trials refine believers, making them partakers of God's holiness (Heb. 12:10).

7. Properties of Sanctification

Imperfect in this Life: While sanctification is ongoing, believers still struggle with sin. However, the process will be completed in glorification.

Progressive: Growth in holiness occurs gradually, like a seed growing into a tree (Mark 4:28).

Certain to Be Completed: Since sanctification is God's work, He will finish what He has begun.

8. Necessity of Sanctification

Sanctification is essential because:

It demonstrates evidence of salvation.

It qualifies believers for fellowship with other saints.

It prepares them for eternal life and communion with God, for "without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

Holiness is not optional; it is the mark of God's people and their fitness for heaven.

CHAPTER 15: THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints asserts that those who are truly regenerated, called by God, converted, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit will persevere in faith until the end and attain everlasting salvation. This doctrine ensures that no genuine believer will fall away completely or eternally. Here are the scriptural and theological bases for this teaching:

1. Scriptural Evidence

Job 17:9: "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that has clean hands shall be stronger and stronger." This illustrates that the righteous, through faith and God's strength, will continue in their spiritual journey despite obstacles.

Psalm 94:14: "The Lord will not cast off His people." God's people, chosen and redeemed by Him, will never be abandoned. Although they may experience trials or feel forsaken, God's promises remain steadfast.

Psalm 125:1-2: "Those who trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed but abides forever." This shows that believers, secure in God's covenant, will remain steadfast through His protection.

Jeremiah 32:40: God promises an everlasting covenant, ensuring that His people will not turn away from Him because He places His fear in their hearts, ensuring their endurance.

John 10:28: Jesus declares, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish." His sheep are held securely in His hand, and no power can remove them.

Romans 8:30: Those whom God predestines, He also justifies and glorifies, showing an unbroken chain leading to salvation.

2. Theological Support

God's Attributes:

Immutability: God does not change in His purposes or promises. His unchanging nature guarantees the eternal security of His elect.

Wisdom: God's plan of salvation, executed through Christ and the Spirit, is perfect and cannot fail.

Power: Believers are kept by God's power, making their perseverance certain.

Justice: God's justice ensures that Christ's atonement fully satisfies the penalty for sin. It would be unjust for God to punish a believer for sins already paid for by Christ.

Covenantal Promises: The covenant of grace, sealed by Christ's blood, guarantees eternal life for believers. God's faithfulness ensures the fulfillment of this covenant.

Christ's Work:

Atonement: Christ's sacrifice secures the salvation of His people, and none for whom He died will be lost.

Intercession: Christ continually intercedes for believers, ensuring their perseverance.

The Holy Spirit: The Spirit regenerates, sanctifies, and seals believers, guaranteeing their eternal inheritance.

3. Addressing Objections

Scriptural Passages Cited Against Perseverance:

Passages like Ezekiel 18:24 and Hebrews 6:4-6 refer to those who outwardly appear righteous or profess faith but lack true saving grace. Their falling away does not indicate the loss of genuine salvation but reveals their lack of true conversion.

Similarly, passages warning against apostasy (e.g., Hebrews 10:26 or 2 Peter 2:20-22) refer to hypocrites or false converts, not true believers.

Examples of Sin Among Believers:

The sins of David, Peter, and others demonstrate human weakness but not the loss of salvation. Their repentance and restoration show God's preserving grace.

Warnings and Exhortations:

Biblical warnings to persevere (e.g., 1 Corinthians 10:12) serve as means to ensure perseverance. They highlight the need for vigilance without suggesting the possibility of total apostasy for true believers.

Theological Concerns:

The doctrine does not promote complacency or sin. Instead, it provides assurance and motivates believers to live holy lives, knowing that their salvation is secure.

4. Conclusion

The perseverance of the saints rests on the unchanging character of God, the sufficiency of Christ's work, and the Spirit's power. This doctrine provides comfort and assurance to believers, affirming that God's saving purposes will not fail. While believers may stumble, God's grace ensures their ultimate salvation.